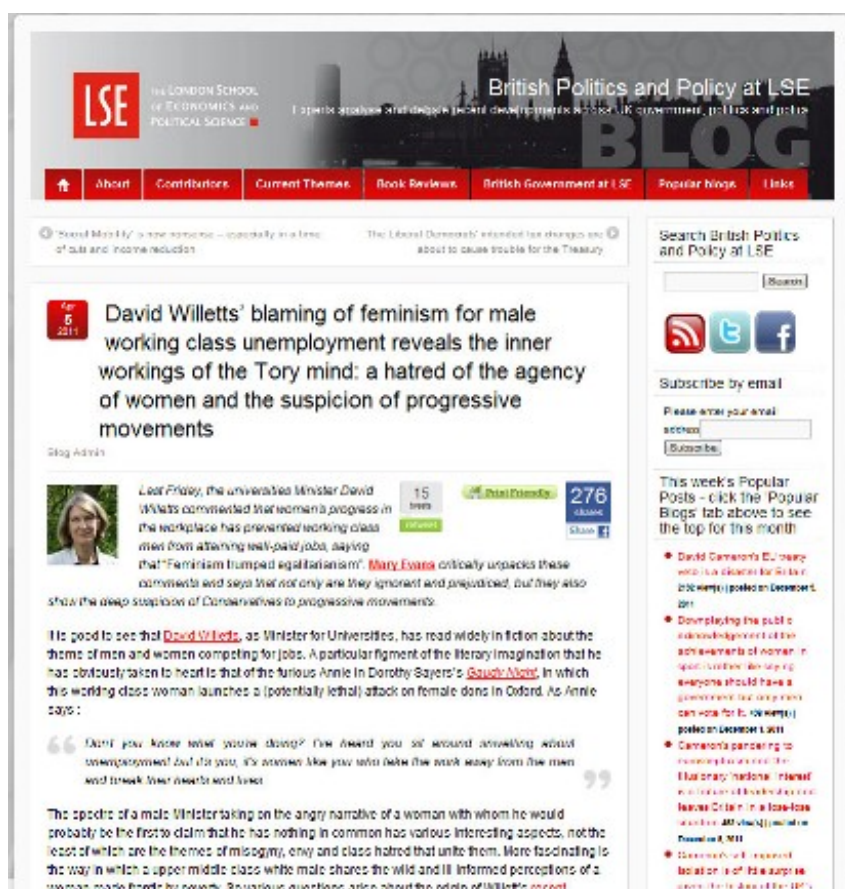


Mary Evans (http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/contributors/#Mary_Evans) is a Centennial Professor at the LSE, based at the Gender Institute. Her series of highly popular posts for the British Politics and Policy at LSE blog have made her one of the blog's most read contributors. Here she discusses her experiences speaking at Occupy LSX, and the qualities of live debate that can't be reproduced online.



Your series of blog posts for the British Politics and Policy at LSE blog – covering the riots, the all-male BBC Sports Personality of the Year shortlist, and the future challenges for feminism – makes you one of the blog's most read contributors, with over 8,500 combined views of your posts. Congratulations! Did you enjoy the process of writing for the blog?

Yes, I very much enjoy writing for the blog; it's a pleasure and privilege.



Would you recommend blogging to other academics as part of a strategy for increasing the impact of their research? To what extent are you seeing a move to digital for universities and academics?

Yes, I think extending online debate is a 'good' thing, but I see it as an addition to face-to-face debate, and not a substitute. There are some qualities in 'live' debate that I don't think can be reproduced online.

Last month you spoke at Occupy LSX on the gendered implications of the financial crisis. What was the reception like? Was it different to speaking at a seminar on campus?

Speaking at Occupy LSX was enjoyable, an engaged and interested audience, though with the inevitable unstoppable talker that is sometimes found! But a terrific chairperson. I chose the topic, which I shared with Professor Diane Perrons, because I think we both shared the sense that gender equality is often overlooked, and with it women's part in public debates (an issue that has been taken up in the last week in various contexts (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/2011/12/01/bbc-sports-personality-men-only-list/>)).

Do you feel that academics have a responsibility to use their knowledge and research to further

public understanding of current issues, for example the economic climate, visibility of women in public sphere, etc?

I do think that academics have a part to play in correcting mis-information about public issues and debates, but absolutely no direct coercion. In my view there is far too much on academics already. On this point (and question 2) I think that there are very interesting issues about finding a place in new forms of communication for discussion and debate that is not just your case/my case. But I am absolutely in favour in correcting, as much as possible, some of the fabrications of sections of the press.

See Mary Evans's series of blog posts for the **British Politics and Policy at LSE** blog (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/?s=mary+evans>).

Related posts:

1. Don't swap the "Ivory Tower" for a cyber one: public engagement and the internet (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/07/29/dont-swap-ivory-tower-cyber-one-public-engagement/>)
2. The recent debate over the 50p tax rate illustrates that academic debates conducted through newspaper letters pages are rarely productive. Economists have an obligation to provide serious evidence for their claims. (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/09/15/academic-letters-newspapers-debate/>)
3. Becoming a Networked Researcher – using social media for research and researcher development (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/07/07/becoming-a-networked-researcher-using-social-media-for-research/>)
4. Academic tweeting: using Twitter for research projects (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/10/05/academic-tweeting-research-projects/>)
5. Should you enter the academic blogosphere? A discussion on whether scholars should take the time to write a blog about their work (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/11/30/should-you-enter-the-academic-blogosphere/>)